

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 2185

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PE

SUBJECT: AIFLD IN PERU -- A NEW APPROACH?

1. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AIFLD OFFICIALS HAVE CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR AND MISSION OFFICERS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS REGARDING THE POSSIBLE REOPENING OF AN AIFLD PROGRAM FOR PERU. IN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF MARCH AIFLD REGIONAL DIRECTOR CHARLES WHEELER ACCOMPANIED BY LABATT HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH LABOR VICE MINISTER AND LABOR MINISTRY LEGAL ADVISOR IN A SEARCH FOR COMMON UNDERSTANDING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIFLD-DIRECTED LABOR INSTITUTE PROGRAM, ITS ORGANIZATIONAL FORM AND ACTIVITIES.

2. AS DISCUSSIONS PROCEEDED LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS SHIFTEE FROM ADVOCATING DIRECT LABOR MINISTRY CONTROL OVER THE INSTITUTE TO SUGGESTING THE POSSIBILITY OF A PROGRAM CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE GOP AND THE USG AND INVOLVING PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES WHILE ESCHEWING LABOR CONFEDERATION PARTICIPATION. FINALLY, THE GOP OFFICIALS CONCLUDED THAT AN INDEPENDENT FOUNDATION WOULD MEET THE NEED (FOR TRAINING WORKERS IN THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONISM) WHILE SPARING THE GOP FROM LEFTIST POLITICAL ATTACK.

3. THE VICE MINISTER ENDED THE PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS ON AN AIFLD PROGRAM BY DECLARING THAT THE GOP AGREED IN PRINCIPLE
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TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A U.S.-FUNDED LABOR CENTER IN LIMA. HOWEVER, HE STATED THAT BECAUSE THE CENTER COULD BE POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SHOULD AVOID A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH THE CENTER AND DEFINE ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROGRAM. RATHER, THE CENTER MIGHT BE SET UP AS A FOUNDATION UNDER PERUVIAN CIVIL CODE (WITH NO FORMAL LABOR MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT) ALONG THE LINES OF THE GERNAM

INTERNATIONAL LABOR FOUNDATIONS. THE FOUNDATION COULD BE SPONSORED BY U.S. TRADE UNIONS AND UNIVERSITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING ANDEAN REGION LABOR STATISTICS AND IMPROVING PERUVIAN TRADE UNION TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES. THE FOUNDATION WOULD CONTRACT WITH PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTES FOR THE PROVISION OF TRADE UNION EDUCATION. IF NECESSARY, IT COULD SET UP ITS OWN INSTRUCTION CENTER.

4. ARMED WITH AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE FOR AN AIFLD-DIRECTED PROGRAM, BUT AWARE THAT THE GOP IS NOT PREPARED TO SIGN A BILATERAL AGREEMENT OR PERMIT A TRADITIONAL AIFLD OPERATION, WHEELER RETURNED TO WASHINGTON TO PURSUE THE FOUNDATION APPROACH. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT AIFLD WILL SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO LIMA TO CONTRACT LEGAL AID IN WORKING OUT PROCEDURES FOR SETTING UP A LABOR FOUNDATION. HE WILL CONSULT WITH UNIVERSITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELICITING THEIR COOPERATION.

5. THE EMBASSY HAS STRONGLY HELD THAT THE GOP MUST BE KEPT INFORMED ABOUT A PROSPECTIVE AIFLD PROGRAM AND MUST APPROVE, AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, ITS OPERATION HERE. FOR THAT REASON, WE PROVIDED AIFLD WITH PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS ON ITS PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO IMPROVE CHANCES OF GOP ACCEPTANCE. FOLLOWING AIFLD LEGAL GROUNDWORK AND ITS DECISION ON THE FEASIBILITY OF THE FOUNDATION APPROACH, THE AMBASSADOR WILL INFORM THE LABOR MINISTER OF AIFLD INTENTIONS IN AN EFFORT TO GAIN HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW OPERATION IF NOT HIS FORMAL BLESSING. ONCE THESE STEPS HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND WE ARE ASSURED OF GOP ACQUIESCENCE AT LEAST AIFLD SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROCEED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT

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OF AN OFFICE AND ASSIGNMENT OF AN AMERICAN DIRECTOR. WE THINK THAT THE OFFICE SHOULD BE STAFFED INITIALLY BY THE DIRECTOR ALONE, PERHAPS WITH SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE. HE SHOULD CAREFULLY STUDY WAYS IN WHICH THE FOUNDATION CAN WORK WITH PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES AND TRADE UNIONS TO ACCOMPLISH AIFLD OBJECTIVES, AT THE SAME TIME MEETING PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT POLITICAL RESERVATIONS.

6. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON COMMENTS AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS. DEAN

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